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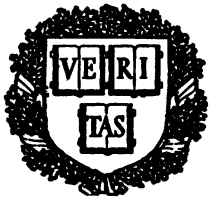

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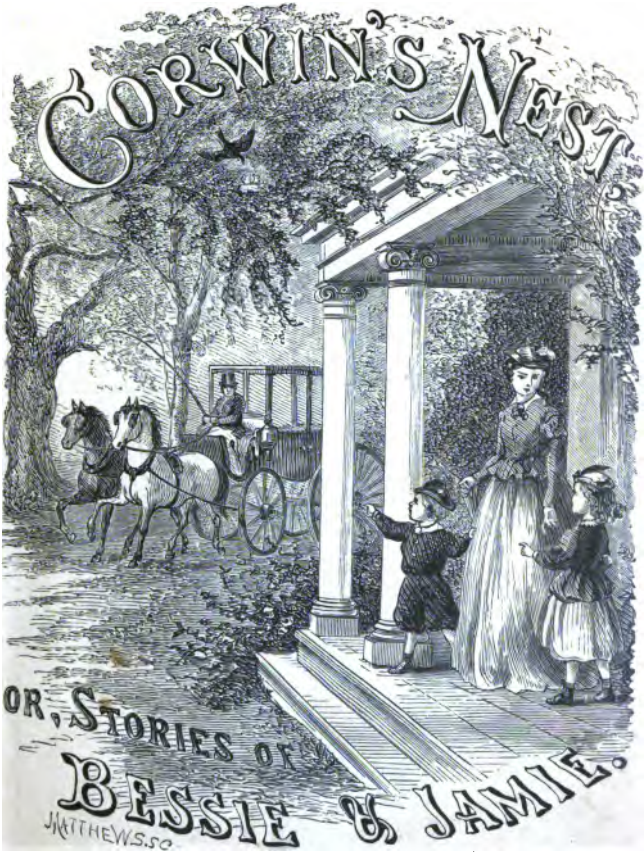

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LITTLE TOT'S LESSONS.

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord." PAUL.

BOSTON:
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CORWIN'S NEST;

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6 vols. 16mo.

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LITTLE TOT'S LESSONS.

CHAPTER I.

BESSIE'S HOME.

I AM going to tell you about a little girl whose name was Bessie. But first you will want to know where she lived, whether in the city or country; whether her father and mother were rich, and lived in a fine house with velvet carpets on

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the floors, and gilt-framed pictures hanging on the walls; or whether they were poor and lived in a tumble-down hut, with rats and mice running around wherever they pleased.

In the pretty town of D—, there is a farm which has long been known by the name of Corwin's Nest. A great many Corwins, sons and grandsons of the first owner, have lived in the large old-fashioned house, which stands in the midst of a growth of trees.

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Bessie's father, James Corwin, had been married about two years when his uncle died; and the large farm descended to him.

The house, though nearly a hundred years old, was in good repair. It stood facing the street about one hundred rods from the granite wall separating it from the road. It had two large rooms in front divided by a wide hall, which ran through the main building. Back of the sitting-room there was an immense dining-hall, and

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back of that the kitchen opening upon a long row of sheds, chicken-houses, wood-houses, chaise-houses, etc.

Bessie's father was a merchant. His store was in the city only four miles distant. But he also did something at farming. He owned four cows, two horses, and a pair of oxen. There were plenty of turkeys, and hens too, besides one old sheep, Molly, and her twin lambs.

Bessie, or Tot, as her papa

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called her, was only six months old when her parents left the city to live in Corwin's Nest; but she always insisted that she remembered the ride, because it was a very cold day, and she froze her cheeks.

This was true, though of course the little miss could not remember it.

When she reached her new home, nurse was waiting at the door to take her from mamma's arms up the long flight of stairs

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to the sunny chamber papa had selected for the nursery.

"Oh," said mamma, with a cry of joy, "how nice and home-like you have made it look! Tot's crib is in exactly the right place."

"There's no end of closets, ma'am," nurse answered, laughing; "such a house for closets and drawers in 'em I never see in all my life before."

"Has all the furniture come?" asked mamma.

"Yes, ma'am; and the beds are

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up, and the carpets are down. Mr. Corwin planned them all out, and laid the parlor ones in the rooms where they were to go, before he went for you. The farmer's wife was here all day helping, and everything is settled, but what you'd wish to do yourself."

"That's good news," exclaimed the lady, laughing, as she hung her cloak in the deep closet. "While Tot is good, I'll run over the house."

On the floor of the nursery was

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a thick, warm carpet, upon which nurse laid Miss Tot, while she folded and put aside the nicely quilted cloak and hood she had just taken off her little pet.

"I don't know what missis will do with her bureaus," she said to herself. "There's drawers enough in this house for a whole town."

Presently the outer door opened, and papa's voice was heard talking in the hall. He had driven his horse to the stable, where the groom was now unharnessing him,

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before leading him into his new stall.

"Yes, indeed," said papa, coming into the nursery with his wife. "It looks very nicely; I think we shall be very comfortable here, and that the pure country air will paint Tot's cheeks a very pretty color. I like the name of the place too, 'Corwin's Nest.' I feel just like Cock Robin with all his treasures safe about him."

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CHAPTER II.

VISIT TO MRS. BLAKE.

BABY BESSIE slept that night as contentedly as if she had always slept in that old-fashioned room. In the morning, while mamma was dressing her, she began once or twice to pucker up her mouth to cry; but she opened her blue eyes wider than ever when she saw the bright

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sun falling on the high moulded cornice. Then she gazed in wonder at the light shining through the heart-shaped holes at the top of the heavy shutters. By the time she had done looking about, mamma had tied the last knot, and was ready to give her the lunch which she liked so well. After this Miss Tot went into her crib for the remainder of the forenoon.

This was mamma's time for work, and how fast her feet did run up and down stairs, carrying

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little ornaments to the parlors, or planning with nurse where pictures should hang!

"We can't drive the nails now while Tot's asleep," the lady explained; "but we will place them where they are to go, and when Mr. Corwin comes home he will hang them."

Before I go any farther I must tell you who nurse was.

Near Mr. Corwin's store in the city there was an old wooden building, in which several families of

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respectable mechanics had their home. From the merchant's office-window, he could look out on a chamber where the sun shone in, giving life, and vigor, and beauty to some bright-hued flowers setting in pots on the window-sill. Sometimes he caught a glimpse of a merry little woman tossing a rosy babe before the flowers.

But one day he saw a hearse move slowly down the street, and then he learned that a man, who lived in that very chamber where

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the flowers bloomed so sweetly, had suddenly died, leaving his wife and child entirely without means of support.

Mr. Corwin was a warm-hearted man. More than this, he tried to follow the example of his blessed Master, who went about doing good. He told his wife of the sad event; and together they went to visit the poor woman.

How changed she was since Mr. Corwin had last seen her at the window! Now she was pale

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and wan, hugging to her breast a little girl nearly a year old, which an elderly lady was trying to take from her.

The kind visitors soon learned the whole sad story. Mr. Blake was a carpenter. He had fallen from a ladder upon a pile of boards, and only lived a few hours after he was carried home. Now his mother had come to beg that little Nell might be left with her, and then the widow could go out as nurse.

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"But I can't, I can't part with my baby! I have never left her for an hour except to run into the church close by. Oh, dear! how many times Joseph and I have counted the months till she could go with us to meeting! He loved meetings so dearly. Now it's all over; he has gone forever."

Here the poor woman wept so bitterly that little Nell was frightened and began to put up her lip to cry, until her grandma coaxed

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her away to show her the flowers.

"You say your husband loved to meet with good people to pray and praise," said Mr. Corwin, in a soothing tone. "Can't you be willing he should be where there is one endless song of praise? Think how happy he is in the society of his Saviour!"

The poor woman uncovered her swollen eyes and held her breath to listen. Presently she said, softly: —

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"I didn't think of that, sir; I only thought how terribly he suffered, and how he used to worry if baby and I didn't have the best he could get — and now —"

"Now," added Mr. Corwin, as her tears flowed again, — "now he is where he will have no more sorrow nor suffering. He is with Christ, who died to save him, and he has given up all care of you and his dear babe to One who loves you far better, — to One who has power to watch over and support you."

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"Don't you remember," asked the old lady, "the night Joseph prayed for little Nell when she was sick? You were afraid God was so great he wouldn't think about such a little child; and Joseph took the Bible and read to you how he notices every little sparrow, though a sparrow was of so little worth that two of them sold for a farthing, — that is, only a fourth part of a penny or about half a cent; and then he said, "Yes, God knows all about our darling

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Nell; and how our hearts are aching for fear we should lose her. He knows every hair of her head; and he will do with her just what is best."

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CHAPTER III.

THE SLEEPING BABY.

FROM this time the poor widow grew more calm. She allowed grandma to take Nell home a few miles into the country while she prepared her few household articles for sale. These had been carefully preserved and sold well.

By this time Mr. and Mrs. Cor-

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win had become so much interested in her, that they offered to take her as an upper servant into their own family. She was to sew, and take care of the house when her mistress was not able. Every Wednesday afternoon she rode in the omnibus to the country to visit grandma and little Nell.

By and by baby Bessie came; and then nurse cried for joy that she had another baby to love and take care of.

Nurse had been in the family a

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year when they moved to Corwin's Nest; and so far neither her master or mistress had ever regretted their kindness to her or her child. Though Mrs. Corwin provided all the clothes worn by little Nell, and always sent a present of food to the old lady when nurse paid her weekly visit; yet they felt richly repaid by the faithfulness of the good woman to their own child.

Once, when Bessie had a fit of sickness, nurse would not leave her for three long weeks; and then

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when her heart was pining for a sight of Joseph's darling, as she used to call Nell, her kind mistress sent for grandma to bring her to the city for a good long visit.

But all this time I have been telling you about Nurse Blake, she and Mrs. Corwin have been running about unpacking books, and filling the large, handsome cases with them, or laying little keepsakes on the table in the centre of the room.

Every time they passed the

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nursery they listened, to be sure Tot had not awaked, and sometimes nurse opened the door softly, and peeped in. The little miss was very considerate this morning, and slept three whole hours, till her mamma was quite tired with her exercise and ready to sit down to rest.

Bessie woke with a pretty smile dimpling her cunning little mouth; and there was mamma leaning over her, love-light beaming from her eyes, ready to take the darling and

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give her a good hearty dinner. Oh, what a nice time there was then in Corwin's Nest! — mamma pressing the soft pink cheek against her breast, kissing over and over again the tiny velvet hand, while Tot every now and then stopped from her dinner to give a happy coo.

Don't you think that mamma's heart went up in gratitude to God for giving her such a precious treasure? I am sure it did. She prayed earnestly, too, that she might have wisdom to train her darling for use-

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fulness on earth, and at last for a residence with Jesus Christ in heaven.

If you have a little sister or brother, you have seen that even the best babies are sometimes naughty. I am sorry to say that our sweet birdie in Corwin's Nest was not an exception to this rule.

Whenever the weather was pleasant, mamma or nurse used to put on her warm, satin-lined cloak, and her pretty knit hood; and then nurse carried her back and forth over the

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sunny path from the house to the street. Even after the snow came this walk was always dry, for papa had found in the barn a great pile of planks, which the man told him made a nice walk down the avenue to the street.

But as I was saying about Bessie, it often happened that when mamma knocked on the window for nurse to come in with her charge, Tot did not like it at all. When they tried to untie her hood, she would throw back her head scream-

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ing with all the strength her lungs would allow; or she would kick and hold her breath until she grew quite black in the face.

"Oh dear!" screamed her mamma, one day, "what shall I do? She will go into a fit. Oh, dear, dear!"

"Babies know a sight more than we think, ma'am," said nurse, patting Bessie smartly on the back to make her catch her breath. "There, she'll be better now."

"But, nurse, she frightens me so

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when she holds her breath in that way. I think it's awful."

"She has a will of her own, ma'am, precious little creature that she is. I remember well what Joseph used to tell me about Nellie. You've got to teach her, Abbie, who's mistress, you or she. If you give up to all her whims, and let her do as she pleases now she is a baby, what authority can you expect to have over her when she is older?"

"But, nurse, you don't think,

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she understands now,—do you? She's only eight months old."

"I don't pretend to say, ma'am; but I do know that a few smart slaps cured my little Nell of holding her breath, and of many another naughty trick beside. It's a solemn thing, ma'am, to train a child. I remember well, Joseph used to say, one can't begin with 'em too young."

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CHAPTER IV.

THE SLEIGH-RIDE.

THE next day was very fine. The snow lay quite smooth and level upon the ground, so that the sleighing was good. At noon the sound of bells at the door drew mamma and nurse to the windows.

Who do you think it was? Why, papa just out from the city.

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"Come down to the door a minute," he called out to his wife.

"I never knew finer sleighing," he said. "It's too good not to be improved. What do you say to taking a ride to B—, and making that call we've talked of so long? Nurse can take Tot and spend an hour or two with her mother."

"I should like it amazingly," said mamma.

"I'll have Tom give the horse

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some oats then," papa said, "while we take a lunch. We can't wait for dinner; or we shall lose the pleasantest part of the day."

Nurse was delighted and began to tell Miss Tot what a very nice time they would have. She laid baby on the bed, as she often did while she ran to take her cloak and hood from the drawer; but Tot didn't like it and began to cry angrily.

Mamma came in with her bonnet and furs, and saw she was

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holding her breath. She remembered her resolution to break Bessie of so bad a habit, and walking speedily to the bed she said, firmly: —

"Stop, baby; naughty, naughty!"

This only made the child worse, and with one catch of her breath she threw her head back, and held it so long that she looked dreadfully.

"Nurse, nurse, come quick!" called mamma. "What shall I do?"

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"Whip her, ma'am; she must be broken of doing so," answered nurse.

It was very, *very* hard; but mamma did it. One, two slaps on the rounded arm made the little miss stop her tantrums. Presently, in a very subdued manner, she laid her head on mamma's shoulder.

"What is it?" asked papa, running up the stairs and coming toward them.

"She's been holding her breath

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again, and I had to punish her," explained mamma, her lips quivering.

"You did right, Alice. I have no doubt it hurt you more than it did her. Now lay her on the bed again. I'll talk to her while you get ready. We must be off in half an hour."

This time Bessie lay quiet, cooing when papa laughed and talked. Mamma ran down to the dining-room to drink a glass of milk, and eat a slice of ginger-

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bread, while papa changed his coat and talked to Tot.

In the mean time nurse put a sandwich in her pocket to eat when she reached her mother's. Then mamma came up to give Baby her dinner while papa ate something. In half an hour the sleigh came to the door, and they were soon driving away.

This was Bessie's first sleigh-ride. Her eyes looked very large and wondering, as she gazed at the sleighs flying in every direc-

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tion, making music with their bells; but presently her head began to sink heavier and heavier on mamma's arm, until her eyes shut, and she was sound asleep.

"I wish you'd let me take her, ma'am," pleaded nurse. "Then you'd feel the good of the ride."

"Not half as much as I do now," laughed mamma, hugging her treasure closer to her breast. "It is the pleasantest sleigh-ride I ever had."

"What's that you say?" asked

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papa, archly. "I remember one when I made you a handsome present."

"Of yourself," she added, with a merry laugh, "which of course I accepted with many thanks. Well, now I have you and Tot too; so I ought to be happier than I was then."

It seemed that all their acquaintances were improving the fine sleighing. Mr. and Mrs. Corwin were continually meeting and bowing to their friends, all of

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whom looked very bright and happy in the clear, frosty air. In about three quarters of an hour they drove up to Grandma Blake's door.

"We'll be back in two hours at farthest," said papa, helping nurse from the sleigh and putting the sleeping Tot into her arms.

"I hope the babies will have a good time together," added mamma.

"I hope so," answered nurse, looking eagerly up to her moth-

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er's window, expecting to see a bright young face.

Two miles farther on the friends lived upon whom they were to call.

Mr. and Mrs. Abbott had just come in from a ride, and dinner was being brought on the table when the visitors drove up.

"You're just in time," urged the lady. "Come and sit right down at the table. It couldn't have happened better. Nonsense! I wont accept any excuse. Mr.

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Corwin, lay your commands upon your wife to act like a sensible woman and eat dinner with us."

"I confess to being hungry," said the gentleman, laughing. "I allowed myself only time for a hasty lunch."

"But I fear it will detain us too long," urged mamma. "We left baby on the way, and the days are so short."

"I thought Miss Bessie had something to do with it," answered Mr. Abbott, merrily. "I

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detected a mother look, with which I am familiar. But we can talk as we eat; and we promise not to detain you a moment after you think best to go."

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CHAPTER V.

THE RIDE HOME.

THE dinner passed off most pleasantly, and punctual to the appointed time the sleigh drove up to Mrs. Blake's door.

Almost at the same instant nurse came hurrying toward them from the house beyond her mother's. Her face was very red and

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anxious. It was quite evident something troubled her.

"O Mrs. Corwin! I thought you would never come to take baby away. My little girl is very sick, burning up with fever like; mother was up with her all night. I'm almost afraid to speak the word, ma'am, but the doctor I went for myself thinks it's the scarlet fever.

"O nurse! you didn't carry baby into the room?" cried Mrs. Corwin, snatching her child and

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pressing it passionately to her breast.

"No, indeed, ma'am! How could ye think that? I haven't even been in the house, though my heart is almost torn in pieces. The woman downstairs came to the door and told me, and I hurried away, though my own dear Joseph's babe is moaning away her life in it."

"You're a dear, faithful creature," exclaimed the lady, tears filling her eyes. "Now go right

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back to little Nell and stay as long as you wish. Your wages shall go on just the same."

"I was sure the mother's heart in you would tell me not to leave my darling," cried nurse, with a burst of grateful tears.

"We never shall forget your thoughtfulness," said Mr. Corwin, trying to steady his voice. "Tell the doctor I will pay his bill; and I hope he will be very attentive to his little patient."

He put the reins between his

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knees, and taking from his porte-monnaie a ten-dollar bill said, "This is a present from your mistress. You may have to buy medicines. Now remember to write at once if you need any more money, and direct the letter to my store."

"I shall think of you constantly till I hear again," said Mrs. Corwin. "We sha'n't forget to pray that your little Nell's life may be spared."

"I can't begin to thank you

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both," sobbed nurse, turning away; "but you know I'm not ungrateful."

Baby Bessie was wide awake now and very restless. She was weary with having her cloak and hood on for so many hours, and more than all she was very hungry. She pulled at her mamma's dress, and seemed to think it very strange that her wants received no more attention.

Mrs. Corwin's heart was full of gratitude that her dear babe had

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not been exposed to the fatal scourge, scarlet fever, and she longed to thank her husband for his generous proffer of help to their good, faithful nurse. But Miss Tot required all her care. She was constantly jumping to change her position, and was only kept from crying by mamma's attempts to amuse her.

"Look, Bessie! see the pretty horse! How fast he goes! Hark, hear the bells jingle! Now there comes another sleigh; see, there's

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a baby in it! a darling baby, just like mamma's little Tot."

Tot here raised a loud cry. She didn't care for horses or babies either when her mouth was dry, and she longed for some warm, sweet milk to be poured down her throat.

"Do drive as fast as you can," mamma exclaimed, in great excitement. "I'm afraid every minute she'll throw back her head and hold her breath."

Papa smiled, though he, too, felt

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worried, and anxious for baby's sake to get home.

"Billy is going at the rate of a mile in three minutes," he answered. "We sha'n't be long on the road. It's new for you to like such fast driving."

"Fear for myself is a very trifling matter compared with my anxiety for Bessie," answered mamma. She had quieted baby for a moment by giving her one of her gloved fingers to suck.

In a short time a turn in the

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road brought them within sight of Corwin's Nest, and never did those grand old trees seem so welcome as now. One minute more, and they dashed up the avenue, the steaming horse pawing with impatience as his master held him by the head while mamma tried to alight with baby in her arms.

"Send Nancy to take in the robes," cried papa, throwing two rich fur blankets upon the piazza. "I'll be back presently."

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There was a blazing fire in the grate, making the nursery look bright and heartsome, as nurse used to say.

Without waiting to do more than to throw off her sack, mamma sat down to give the poor, tired baby her supper.

What do you suppose she thought of, as she sat there in her comfortable apartment holding her darling close to her breast?

Why, she thought how good God was to her in preserving her child

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from sickness and suffering while others were stricken down by disease. One, two tears fell upon Tot's hand as the lady thought of nurse watching by the side of little Nell, and sending up prayers for her recovery. She determined that God's mercy to her should make her more sympathizing and active in relieving the sorrows of those around her.

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CHAPTER VI.

LITTLE NELL'S SICKNESS.

NOW that nurse was away Mrs. Corwin thought she had never before realized what a comfort the woman was. In the morning Bessie awoke early and was ready for nurse to take her on a visit to the warm kitchen. She admired to sit there between nurse's knees, well wrapped up in her flan-

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nel sack, and watch cook running here and there making preparations for breakfast. She liked to see the morning sun shining on the bright row of dish-covers hanging so conspicuously opposite the dressers.

The day after her ride Bessie wondered not a little that nurse did not come to take her from her crib. Every time there was the sound of a door opening below she popped up her tiny head and turned her bright eyes eagerly toward the entrance.

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"I wish I knew how Nelly is this morning," said mamma. "Poor nurse, what a terrible trial it would be to her to lose Joseph's baby, as she calls the child!"

Just then there was a knock at the door, and Nancy came in, smiling, to say she had hurried through her morning work so as to take baby to the kitchen.

"And cook says, ma'am, that she'll wait at table this morning, if you'll put up with her, not being very used to it, and then I can

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keep baby with me while I make the nursery tidy."

"Thank you, Nancy, and you must thank cook, too, for her thoughtfulness. With such willing hands I know we shall get along nicely till poor nurse comes back."

"I'd be right sorry for her to be in trouble," answered Nancy. "She has done me many a kind turn, and cook says the same."

The visit to Mr. Abbott's was on Wednesday. It was about ten o'clock Friday forenoon when baby

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was soundly sleeping in her crib, and Mrs. Corwin, having dusted her chamber, put baby's dressing-basket in order, and set it on a shelf in the large closet, took some stockings from the mending-basket and sat down to sew.

She did not hear a sound on the stairs; but suddenly the door opened, and there stood nurse, as smiling as though nothing had ever troubled her.

"Why, nurse, how came you here?" exclaimed mamma, rising

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and shaking the woman's hand. "How is Nellie?"

"As well as ever, ma'am. It wasn't the scarlet fever at all. I'll run to my room, and throw off my bonnet, and tell you the whole story from the beginning, while I'm doing my mending."

She was gone scarcely five minutes, then took her thimble and, stretching a stocking over her hand, began: —

"I thought it strange, ma'am, that neither mother nor Nell came

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to the door when the sleigh stopped. I ran up the steps when you had gone; and there the woman who lives below stopped me. She said Nell was very sick, shaking her head as if she dared not tell me all; and mother had been up all night. Her cheeks were crimson, and her poor little hands were so hot that it would almost burn you to touch them.

"I never had a thought of taking Bessie into the room; but oh, I was so sorry you hadn't kept her with

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you! I couldn't help crying, I longed so to run to my darling. Once I thought of leaving baby with the woman while I went to the chamber; but the fear of bringing the fever, if it was catching, in my clothes, kept me back. I dared not stay in the house even, so I went through the streets with tears running down my cheeks, till I came to the doctor's.

"His wife is a real lady, ma'am, and when she saw the trouble I was in, she made me tell her all about

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it; and she praised me for bringing your baby away. The doctor came home soon, and, without waiting to take his dinner, which was all ready for him, he went to see poor little Nell.

"The doctor's wife made me drink a bowl of tea and eat some meat, though, indeed, I had little appetite; and then the doctor came home looking very grave.

"'I haven't known a case of scarlet fever this season,' he said; 'but this seems very like it. I gave her a

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powder, and I shall go in again presently.'

"I felt a dreadful sinking after this. Bessie began to fret, too, with having her cloak on so long. I walked back with her to the street where mother lived, listening before the house, ready to faint with fear. I felt sure you'd tell me to stay, and I tried to be patient till you'd come. But oh, it did seem so long! Sometimes I thought it was wrong for me to wish to keep Nelly from her father. It seemed to me he

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must be happier to have her with him."

Nurse stopped a minute, wiping her eye. "I never shall forget, ma'am, how kind you and Mr. Corwin were, in my trouble. After you'd gone I rushed up to mother's room. The woman had told her I was there. Poor little Nell looked awfully. I couldn't tell whether she knew me at all. The doctor's powder was beginning to operate, and she seemed sick at her stomach.

"Once or twice during the even-

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ing she wanted to vomit, but it frightened her, and she tried to hold back. I called mother, and she held her while I put my finger down her throat.

"Oh, ma'am, what a relief that was! Such a load of orange-peel as she threw off her stomach! That was all the trouble. I took her in my arms, and coaxed her, and talked till I got her to drink a whole tumblerful of warm water, and then she vomited again.

"When the doctor came in the

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morning, I was feeding the poor darling with a few spoonfuls of gruel. He said the fever was all gone. I paid him a dollar, ma'am; and he said he needn't come any more.

"I had it in my heart to come back at once; but mother was worn out with two nights' watching. She's as bright as ever this morning; and Nell was playing with her dolly when I came away."

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CHAPTER VII.

THE FUNNY LETTER.

ONE afternoon when Mr. Corwin came from the city he brought a note for his wife.

She opened it and read aloud a very funny letter from her sister's babe to little Bessie.

It began:—

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"Cousin dear,
Would'st thou hear
From me?
I will write
With delight to thee.

"I with this
Send a kiss
To John.
Do, I pray,
Kindly lay
It on."

John was one of Bessie's dolls which her aunt had given her.

Then the funny letter went on to say that the baby intended soon to make her cousin a visit, and

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hoped Bess would have her baby-house all ready.

"She will expect them to entertain her," explained mamma, archly. "I am sorry to say, Tot is decidedly selfish."

Papa shook his head gravely, saying, "Yes, I fear she is; but perhaps that is in consequence of being the only object of attention in the family. We have all become slaves to her will. When she is asleep, the whole house must be kept as quiet as a church;

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and when awake, it is not enough that nurse must be wholly devoted to her, she demands your care also.

"If I have a headache, ever so severe, I must bear it as well as I can, without any of those loving cares which once soothed me into forgetfulness of my pain."

"O James!" began Mrs. Corwin; but he said, "Hush," and went on.

"And it is not enough that every member of our own family must give up our convenience to hers; even

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our visitors must be put under restraint. To say nothing of your giving up your music, because she does not fancy hearing the piano at a distance, and when she is present prefers to play herself; but Miss Evarts must neglect her practice, because baby is either asleep, and cannot be disturbed, or she is awake and must be amused. It is no wonder that she remarked quietly to her mother: —

"'What a bore babies are!'"

"Did she really say that?" asked

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mamma, with flushed cheeks; "and when she pretended to be so fond of Bessie too?"

"I cannot really blame her. I am afraid, Alice, we, in our fondness, are growing selfish too."

Mrs. Corwin looked very grave, and at last said, with a sigh: —

"I'm afraid it is so; but what can I do?"

"Teach your child to give up her own wishes for yours. She is old enough to learn that lesson. I fancy we should all be happier."

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"I must answer little Kitty's letter. When shall I ask them to come?" Mamma's tone was rather anxious.

"Do just as you please about that. But by all means have little Nelly Blake here whenever you can. She is the best-behaved child I see anywhere. I would like her to be here every day, only nurse must be told that Bessie is not always to have her own way, to keep all the toys, and pull her companion's curls as much as she pleases."

That night when Tot had been

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undressed and was lying in her crib mamma thought about what papa had said.

Baby was now almost a year old, a strong, healthy girl, just learning to stand alone. It was true that she was determined to have her own way. In the morning she awoke as soon as it was light, and, instead of lying quietly in her crib till nurse came to carry her below, she insisted on being taken into mamma's bed. Here she amused herself pulling the strings of mamma's night-

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cap, or tangling her fingers in mamma's hair.

Once or twice she climbed on papa's breast and scratched at his nose, which happened to be quite an important feature; but a well-timed slap soon cured her of disturbing his morning slumbers.

Sometimes when nurse was particularly busy, Tot had been allowed to sit in her new high chair at the table. She had not learned to sit quietly and keep her fingers from the butter-plate, or the dish of pre-

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serves; no, she snatched at anything within her reach.

Sometimes mamma smiled; sometimes she said, in a soft voice: —

"Naughty Bessie; mamma's little girl mustn't touch."

Papa, on said occasions, generally sat silent, though he often looked very grave. Once after Tot had gone to bed he asked, seriously: —

"How long are you going to allow Bessie to do as she pleases; to make you obey her instead of her obeying you?"

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All these things and many more mamma thought of as she sat there that calm, moonlight night waiting for Bessie to shut her eyes.

"She is not to blame, the little darling," said mamma to herself. "It is my fault. I ought to teach her to obey me promptly and cheerfully. She is quite old enough now to understand. I must begin, too, to teach her to go to sleep by herself. Nurse says she never thought of watching Nell. She had too much to do. She used to undress her and

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give her a bath, carry her to her papa for a good-night kiss, and then, as she expresses it, chuck her into the bed in their little chamber, tuck her in, and shut the door."

Mamma looked very sad as she thought how much her baby had to learn before she would submit to such treatment. She had a very tender heart, which had led her to indulge Bessie more than was good for the little one; but she was brave as well as tender; and when she once resolved to do a thing there

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was no doubt, with the help of God, she would do it.

She rose softly from her chair, and, kneeling by the crib, asked God to help her train her child aright, repeating the gracious promise: "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."

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CHAPTER VIII.

TOT'S FIRST LESSON.

EVERYBODY said little Tot was a real Corwin. She had her father's dark gray eyes with long, heavy, black lashes; and she had a little dimple in her chin, very like one covered up under his heavy beard.

But if she was like papa, she was like mamma too. She had a lovely

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complexion, soft and white, with a pretty tinge of rose coming and going with her different moods. Her head was covered with tiny rings of golden hair, glistening like satin. There was no doubt Bessie was an uncommonly handsome child, and that, if she should live, she would become a very attractive woman.

The next morning, after mamma had resolved to begin a new course of training, nurse said to her mistress: —

"It's such a fine day, ma'am, I'll

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try to do up your new muslin dress. If Bessie is good-natured I could do the laces while I have the starch ready. I think muslins look better to be clapped dry in a bright sun."

"Very well, nurse," answered the lady. "I'll take care of Bessie, and dust the nursery, so you can go to work directly after breakfast."

Mrs. Blake looked anxious, as she said, "It will be too hard, ma'am, for you to do that. She has a bad habit lately of making me carry her about while I dress the beds and

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dust. She thinks, little dear, that she helps me.

"Did you carry Nell about when you did your work?" inquired mamma, smiling.

"La, no, ma'am, that was very different! When she was nine months old, I used to give her a basket of clothes-pins, or sometimes a pan and a spoon,—poor folks don't have silver bells or rattles to jingle,— and there she'd sit by the hour as contented as a kitten."

"There is no reason," said the

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lady, firmly, 'why Bessie should not learn to do as Nell did. I have been thinking about it. We have indulged Tot too much. Now she must take some wholesome lessons."

"And I'm glad indeed, ma'am, to hear you say that. Not that I mind waiting on the little miss, or humoring her in any way; but she'll be happier, ma'am, if she's taught to yield her wishes to yours. Money wouldn't tempt me to have Nell pampered and indulged. I'd be sure 'twould ruin her."

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"Your little daughter is uncommonly sweet-tempered," responded Mrs. Corwin, with a little sigh. "I shall be thankful indeed if Bess grows to be like her."

Nurse had now turned the mattresses, and was ready to go below. Mamma held baby at the window to bow to papa when he rode away to the city.

"Now, Tot," said mamma, "you must have your first lesson." She set the little miss on the carpet, and gave her a string of buttons to play

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with, and then commenced to dress the beds. Bess threw the buttons away and cried for mamma to take her.

"No, no, darling! mamma must work now. There, take these pretty shells."

But Bess would not even look at the shells; she crept across the floor and tried to pull herself up by mamma's dress.

"Baby must play by herself," said mamma, going on with her work.

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Tot stared a minute as if she did not understand, and then burst into a loud, angry cry.

"Naughty, naughty girl!" said mamma, though her heart was aching sadly.

Presently nurse came running up from the kitchen. "I can do the muslins when she is asleep," she said, eagerly.

"No, nurse, go right down. She must be taught to obey; and you must help me teach her; don't speak to her now."

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"Mrs. Corwin is right," muttered nurse; "but I pity the dear little child."

This was a hard lesson both for mamma and baby; but after an hour of trying to get her own way, finding she did not succeed, but only made her own head ache, she stopped crying and turned to her basket of toys which mamma had put within her reach.

Her eyes were red and swollen, and every now and then she sighed; but when mamma said, cheerfully,

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"Bessie's good girl now," she laughed with satisfaction and delight.

By this time mamma had dressed the bed, and dusted every article of furniture; but she did not wish to take Tot up too soon after she had stopped crying. She went into the large closet and began to wash some of the little vases which had held flowers.

Not even when she was left alone did Bessie cry. She crept after her rattle, which had rolled away, and

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began to shake it as hard as she could, laughing to herself at the noise.

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CHAPTER IX.

TOT'S SECOND LESSON.

"NOW," said mamma to her baby, "we have earned the right to enjoy ourselves." She took a small cracker from the cupboard, and put it in her pocket. Then she put on a pretty little hat which she wore when she walked about the grounds and, going into the nursery, said: —

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"Come, darling, we will go and see the chickens."

Bessie's white sun-bonnet with fluted ruffles was soon tied over her curls, her blue sack buttoned in her neck, and with the baby arms clinging tightly around her neck, they went down the stairs.

Nurse ran to lift the carriage down the steps, making the little miss very happy by her praises; and then they started away, Bess munching the cracker with her two new, cunning little teeth.

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Oh, how happy mamma felt! The first struggle was over, and so well over.

"Now," said the lady to herself, "I must be firm; every time she will yield up her own will more readily."

When the dinner-bell rang, nurse was just in the midst of ironing the skirt of her mistress' dress; if she left it, the part not yet ironed would be too dry, and the whole must be done over.

Nancy ran up to ask whether she

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might take baby to the kitchen till nurse had finished her nice job.

"No," mamma replied; "she has awaked very good-natured. Set her high chair at the table, and she shall have dinner with me."

It will be a good time, the lady thought, to give her another lesson.

So mamma put another cracker in her pocket, and told Nancy to bring the pretty silver porringer, holding her milk, to the dining hall.

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When she sat down, mamma put her hand on Bessie's, and, bending her head, softly asked God to bless the food he had provided for them, and help them to be grateful for this and all his other mercies.

Then she began to cut herself a slice of nice tender steak from the platter, while Nancy pushed out of Tot's reach a dish of macaroni, and the salt-cellar.

"You need not do that," said mamma; "baby is old enough to learn to let things alone."

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Nancy was astonished, and afterwards told the cook it would take a good many lessons to teach the little miss to keep her busy fingers to herself.

Mrs. Corwin, having helped herself to all that she needed, began to eat her dinner, while Bessie cooed and bit off tiny pieces of the cracker. This, and drinking occasionally from the porringer held by Nancy, kept her busy until mamma was ready for the dessert.

"Baby is mamma's good girl,"

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said the lady, cutting a piece of cocoanut-pie. "Baby must have ever so many kisses when papa comes home."

She had scarcely finished speaking when the little miss leaned forward and made a dash at the goblet of water which stood near her.

"O Bessie! that was very naughty!" exclaimed mamma. "See how you have spilled the water on the clean cloth. If Bessie touches it again mamma will slap her hand."

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Nancy, greatly wondering, refilled the glass and set it just where it was before.

Baby put out her hand, looked at mamma, who said, firmly, "No, no! mustn't touch!" then caught it with a laugh, throwing the water over her arm and sleeve.

"Baby is naughty, very naughty," said mamma; "I must whip her."

She took the dear little rounded arm in hers, and slapped it two or three times.

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Papa had often slapped it quite as hard in play; but now she knew this was not play, and she began to scream.

While Nancy was sopping up the water with a napkin, mamma talked to Tot, and then the goblet was filled again and set back as before. "Mustn't touch," said the lady, firmly, shaking her head.

Bessie put out her hand, shaking her head, and trying to say no, no.

Mamma went on, eating her pie, talking cheerfully to the child, who

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did not touch the glass again, though she sat there some time.

Then, without seeming to do so, Mrs. Corwin pushed the sugar-bowl within reach of the little fingers. As she expected, they moved quickly toward it, but stopped at her decisive, "No, no, Bessie."

This time the command needed no repetition. Tot sat back in her chair contentedly nibbling at her cracker.

Mamma's heart beat with joy as

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she said to herself, "The second lesson is through."

"I do declare, ma'am," exclaimed Nancy, "I wouldn't have believed she had so much understanding if I hadn't seen it with my own eyes."

"Baby is mamma's darling girl," said the lady, rising and pressing Tot to her breast. "Baby good, so mamma give her a fig."

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CHAPTER X.

TOT'S NEW PRESENT.

I MUST go back a little to tell you something about little Nell. In the first volume I told you about her sickness in consequence of eating orange-peel.

When nurse came home from taking care of her, she said one day, "I wish mother lived nearer.

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I shall never feel quite so safe again, when I am away."

Soon after this her mistress found a little cottage close by Corwin's Nest, half of which was vacant. The rent was only thirty dollars a year. She told her husband about it, and then, without saying anything to nurse, they rode seven miles to Mrs. Blake's and asked her to come and live there.

The old lady owned the house in which she lived, and let the whole of the lower story. The rent paid

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by her two tenants supported her well in her economical way of living; but as she did not wish to be idle, she made coarse bags for buckwheat and grain, for which she was paid three cents apiece. In the evening she knit woollen socks for her neighbors.

She was delighted with the plan of being near her daughter-in-law; and, as she soon ascertained that one of her tenants had a friend who would take her rooms at fifty dollars' rent, she concluded to

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occupy part of the cottage near Corwin's Nest.

Nurse now saw little Nell two or three times a week, for, with her mistress' permission, when she took Bessie to ride in her little carriage, she ran in to say "Good-morning" to the inmates of the cottage. Beside these short visits, Nell came once a week to play with Bessie, and a very nice little girl she was too.

This was how papa happened to say that whoever else came to

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visit his baby, Nell must be invited, she was such a well-behaved child.

Bessie's birthday came the next week after her two lessons about which I have told you. Papa was so pleased that such a good beginning had been made in her training, that he said mamma might choose whatever she pleased for a birthday present.

Can you guess what mamma's choice was? Do you think it was a wax doll with flaxen curls?

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Oh, no! Bess was too young to play with a wax doll. Was it a box of nice blocks for her to build houses with? No. Her cousin Maurice had promised to buy those for her; and nurse was spending all her afternoons at her mother's in making a large rag-baby, which Tot could kiss and carry to bed, or throw about as much as she pleased.

Mamma's present was a little silky spaniel, for which she gave five dollars. It was to be brought

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to Corwin's Nest on the day Bessie was a year old; and mamma found a pretty blue ribbon which she intended to tie around its neck.

The dog's name was Flossy; but I shall tell you more about her by and by. Now I must tell you about Tot's third lesson, which was a very hard one indeed.

You know that it was Mrs. Corwin's habit to sit by the crib until her baby was asleep. Some-

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times the little miss was full of frolic; or her nap in the morning had been so late she wasn't one bit sleepy; and then it took a long time to quiet her. All this while papa, who had just returned from the city, was impatient for his wife's company.

A day or two after Bessie had taken her first and her second lesson, and when she had come to know very well what the words "no, no, naughty, and good," meant, mamma resolved to teach

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her to go to sleep by herself. She dreaded it a good deal, and so did nurse, who thought it only right for the little miss to be indulged more than her own baby had been.

"I'll begin in the morning when papa is away," the lady said to nurse.

"It'll be the hardest lesson, she's had yet, ma'am."

At ten o'clock mamma fed baby, and made sure that there was no pin to prick her; then she kissed

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her and laid her in the crib. The room was pretty dark, to keep the flies out; and everything was as comfortable for the little one as loving hands could make it.

"Bessie shut her eyes and go to sleep now," mamma said, turning to leave the room.

There was a shrill cry as the door closed, and then the lady heard the little girl trying to get out of her crib.

"That will never do," she said

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to nurse, who was listening with her. "She'll fall and break her neck."

So she opened the door softly, and went back.

"No, no," she said; "baby must lie down. Baby naughty, naughty!"

She laid her on the pillow once more, tucking the spread as tightly as possible under the mattress and went out again.

This had to be repeated many times. Over and over the poor

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mamma had to slap the tiny arms, until, exhausted by her crying, the tired Tot fell asleep.

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CHAPTER XI.

TOT'S THIRD LESSON.

WHEN papa came from the city, he found mamma lying on the lounge, sick with a headache.

With tears in her eyes, she repeated to him what had occurred, adding: —

"I don't believe she will ever learn to go to sleep by herself. I

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ought to have begun when she was younger."

Mr. Corwin encouraged his wife by saying she had only done her duty; and that Tot would certainly yield after a few struggles.

He persuaded her to take a short ride with him, hoping it would give her strength for the evening lesson.

Bedtime for the little miss came all too soon for mamma, who dreaded baby's cries more than she could express.

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Papa would gladly have taken the burden from her; but she well knew that her own authority must be established.

While Bessie was being undressed she clung to mamma's neck, kissing her, lisping over and over again the pretty sound she had learned to make, "Ma, ma, ma." It was almost more than the lady could endure.

What do you think she did? Why, she held her darling close to her breast, while she asked her

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pitying Father in heaven to give her strength and wisdom to guide her aright. Then she said: —

"Come, darling, mamma will put her in her little bed. Bessie will be good girl and not cry."

Poor little birdie, how tightly she clung to mamma's hand! and when she found herself alone with the moonlight shining around her, what a grieved cry went up from her tender heart!

The lady stood just outside the door, holding her hand against her

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side, longing to go in and comfort her babe. But papa presently joined her, and comforted her with the thought that the struggle would soon be over.

Then he drew a pleasant picture of their little one yielding instant obedience to their wishes; active, cheerful, and affectionate, — such as all could love, and whom their heavenly Father would bless.

In fifteen minutes the sobs grew fainter and fainter, until at last, when mamma crept softly to the

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bedside, she saw that baby was asleep.

Stooping over the crib she kissed the pretty rounded cheeks, still wet with tears, and then called papa to do the same.

"Is the third lesson through?" he asked, smiling, as they went together down the stairs.

"I think the worst is over," mamma answered. "It has been a hard lesson both for her and for me."

Presently nurse went up to her

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sewing, to be near the baby, and Mrs. Corwin sang and played on the piano, as she used to do months before Bessie came to be a well-spring of happiness in the house.

At nine o'clock the servants came in for family prayer; and then Mr. Corwin read the beautiful chapter about Christ's sympathy with his people. Oh, what comfort there was in the verse, "For we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities"!

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"Yes," said the lady to herself, "my Saviour did pity my poor fainting heart when I was trying to make my child learn her first lessons of obedience to God's will. He says, 'Children, obey your parents,' and I have been teaching her to do so, trusting in his gracious promise to keep her in the right path."

When the reading was through, and papa knelt for prayer, he asked God to bless the mother in her sweet duties, and to bless the

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little child now first learning submission to parental authority.

When they retired to bed that night it was a peaceful, happy home, that the moon shone so brightly upon, that home called Corwin's Nest.

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CHAPTER XII.

BESSIE AND THE CHICKENS.

THE next morning, when the breakfast-bell rang, papa was nowhere to be found; but before they had time to wonder where he could be, he came quickly up the steps to the piazza, bringing two pretty bouquets, one for each of his darlings.

Little Bess was going through

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the wide hall, in nurse's arms, on her way to the kitchen for her breakfast, when papa presented her with his morning gift.

Tot was very fond of flowers, rather too fond mamma sometimes said, for she used to try to eat them. But now she held them so daintily to her nose, snuffing little sniffs at them, and then holding them out for mamma to do the same, that they all laughed very heartily indeed. Truly they were enjoying them-

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selves so merrily that they never thought of the muffins and hot coffee being spoiled by their delay.

At last Nancy came into the entry to see what detained them so long; and then papa tapped Bessie cheeks, saying: —

"O you little thief! See how you've stolen ten minutes of papa's precious time."

While they were at the table papa and mamma talked of the birthday, and wondered what baby

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would say to the pretty spaniel, when it was brought home.

Then they went into the sitting-room, or library, as one of the large front rooms was named, and attended prayers, after which Mr. Corwin's horse came to the door, and he drove rapidly away.

It was one of June's loveliest mornings. The air was fragrant with roses and sweet-briar, which grew in great profusion around Corwin's Nest. Mrs. Corwin stood for a moment at the front door,

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gazing after her husband. Can you guess what she was thinking of? She was saying to herself, "How grateful I ought to be to my heavenly Father, who has given me so many blessings, — such a delightful home, and such dear home-treasures?"

Suddenly she turned at a sound from Bessie, and said: —

"Put on Tot's bonnet and sack, nurse, and I will take her out. This beautiful air will do us both good."

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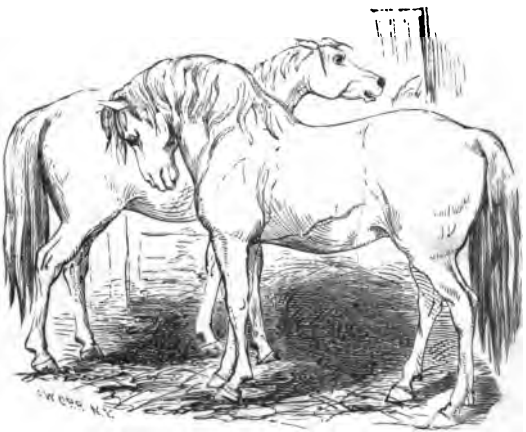

THE TWO CARRIAGE HORSES STANDING IN THE BARNYARD. — *Vol. I., page* 139.

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Mamma tied on her hat, which hung from the rack, and then nurse lifted the carriage down from the passage to the smooth, gravelled walk.

All this while baby was cooing and sniffing at her flowers, which nurse had tied together with a string, and which she held tightly as she was lifted into the carriage.

They went first to the barn-yard, where the two carriage-horses, Billy and Fanny, were standing, and mamma lifted Bessie up, so she

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could look at them over the high fence; then they went on to visit the henery, where there were ever so many hen-coops, with laths nailed across the front, leaving spaces wide enough for the little round yellow chicks to scamper in to their mother when she called them.

This was not the first time, by many, that Tot had been to see the chickens since they came out of their shells; but she was so delighted, she tried to stand up in

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her carriage and reach one of the pretty yellow balls.

She threw away the flowers, her eyes sparkling, and her cheeks very rosy, as she stretched over the strap which kept her firmly in the carriage, calling out "Ma, ma, ma," just as the little chicks called their mother, "Chirp, chirp, chirp."

In a dish close by, mamma saw some dough, made of Indian meal, with which the man had been feeding them.

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She took a stick and began to scatter some of the dough on the board before the cage, and laughed to hear the old hen call out, "Cluck, cluck, cluck," to her chicks to come and eat.

In the next coop the little chicks had eaten all they wanted, and were taking their morning nap under the shelter of their mother's wing.

John, the farmer, came along, and told his mistress these were only two days old. He said there

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were sixteen of them, all bright and healthy. The old hen did her best to protect her brood; but there were so many that some were only just under the feathers, one little wing being left out in the cold.

Mrs. Corwin was as much pleased to watch them as Bessie was. She was greatly amused to see that the old hen meant to treat all her chicks alike, and that when one had been nicely warmed under her breast she pushed it

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to the outside row, and took one of the cold ones in.

From the henery they were walking toward the front door, when John asked his mistress to look at the ram he had been fattening in the stable. He was a big fellow, and, as the man said, almost ready to kill.

From the barn the lady suddenly turned in the direction opposite the mansion house.

"I'll go down the lane and call a moment on Grandma Blake,"

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THE RAM IN THE STALL. — *Vol. I., page* 144.

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she said to herself. "By that time Bessie will be so tired she will be glad to go to sleep, even if she is left alone."

The old lady was in the garden, digging round some old pink and peony roots which she had found almost covered with weeds.

Nell was running after her with a little basket, into which she was putting some small chips and stones. Nell was now two years and a half old, and was a stout, red-cheeked girl as any one would

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wish to see. She threw down her basket when she saw Mrs. Corwin with the carriage, and ran to kiss the pretty baby seated in it.

After a short call, during which Mrs. Corwin invited Nell to spend Bessie's birthday at the great house, they returned home, and reached the door just as the old-fashioned clock in the hall was striking ten.

"Your lunch of bread and milk is all ready, miss," said nurse,

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cheerfully, as she ran down to lift her charge from the carriage. "I think, ma'am," she added, "she'll make short work of going to sleep to-day. Her eyes are heavy with sleep now."

Tot drank her milk very quietly, ate one or two pieces of the soft bread, and then spit out a mouthful as she always did when she had had enough.

Then mamma took her, while nurse shut out the bright sun, and laid her in her crib.

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"Good-by, pet," she said, softly; "Bessie nice girl to-day."

Bess gave one loud scream as mamma and nurse left the room; but almost before nurse had reached the foot of the stairs the cry had ceased, and all was still.

Mamma listened eagerly for a few minutes, and then she went softly in, and found that the lesson was learned at last, and Bessie had gone to sleep alone.

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CHAPTER XIII.

FEEDING THE HUNGRY.

MRS. CORWIN took her writing-desk into the cool parlor-chamber, and sat down to write notes of invitation to Bessie's birthday party. She folded a small slip of paper, and wrote down the names of the cousins, etc., who were to come.

Then she opened the part of

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the desk where she kept her pretty gilt-edged paper, with a large C for Corwin stamped on the top, and was just dipping her gold pen into the ink, when Nancy came up to say that there was a poor woman at the back door with a sick child.

"I think it's starving, they are, ma'am, and cook says if you're willing she'll get them a meal."

"Certainly, Nancy, I will go down myself, and attend to it."

She laid aside her writing, and

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followed the chambermaid to the kitchen. It was a pitiable sight indeed. The woman, scarcely more than twenty years old, very neatly though poorly dressed, held close to her heart a babe, whose pale, wan face drew tears from the lady's eyes.

"Is it sick?" she asked.

"I don't know, ma'am. I'm not used to children; but we're both hungry."

"Cook, are you making some tea? Milk will be best for baby,

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or cream with sugar and boiling water. Get some cream, quick, Nancy."

Mrs. Corwin went to the pantry herself and brought bread, butter, and cold meat, asking meantime: —

"How long have you been without eating?"

"I had a bit of bread and a cup of milk, yesterday, ma'am. It was the first time I ever begged; but I had to do it, baby moaned so dreadfully."

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Nancy had now mixed the cream and water; and Mrs. Corwin, seeing that the table was set, said, kindly: —

"Give me the baby while you eat some dinner. I'll feed the poor little dear."

The woman gave the child into the lady's arms without a word, though she looked very thankful. Then she lifted the bowl into which cook had poured the tea, making it nourishing with milk and sugar, and, holding it to her

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lips with trembling hands, drained every drop.

She sank back in her chair after this, and, clasping her hands, whispered some words of thanks to God.

Both cook and Nancy had their backs to the woman, so that they did not see this act; but Mrs. Corwin did, and her heart warmed more than ever to the mother and child.

The poor baby was so feeble at first that it could scarcely swal-

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low, but after taking a few spoonfuls of nourishing, nice drink it stopped moaning, and fixed its dreamy eyes on the kind face watching over it.

"Isn't it awful, ma'am?" exclaimed Nancy, who was on her knees, holding the cup from which her mistress was feeding the baby. "Poor little dear! I think she looks the better for the drop she's had."

Baby closed her eyes; but in her doze her mouth puckered up

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for more milk. So the lady kept on feeding her very slowly, keeping the poor mouth moist with a few drops at a time, until the cupful was all gone.

Then she told Nancy to bring a large chair from the dining-room, and put a pillow in it so that baby could have a nice nap.

The woman ate but little, after all. "I'm afraid, ma'am," she said, when Mrs. Corwin pressed her to take more; "but if ye'll let me put a piece of bread in my pocket

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for my supper, I'll thank ye kindly."

"Take the bread and welcome, my poor woman; but you're not able to walk any further to-day. You must stay here, and have supper and a good sleep. By and by, when you're able, you may tell me your history, and where you're going; and perhaps I can help you."

"I can't speak much, ma'am, my heart is too full; but I'm very thankful." The tears trickling

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down her cheeks, as she gazed on her baby comfortably sleeping on the pillow, proved that she was really so.

"Nancy," said the lady, "run up to the attic for that low rocking-chair. It will rest the woman to sit in that; and when baby wakes, it will be handy to tend it in."

When the woman had taken off her old straw hat, Mrs. Corwin saw that she had beautiful brown hair, which was nicely coiled round

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the back of her head. There was a propriety in her language and her manners which proved that she was not a common beggar. Every moment the lady grew more interested in her. She went out a few moments to give the poor creature time to rest; and what do you think she did? Why, she crept on tiptoe to the side of Bessie's crib; and when she saw her darling so round and rosy, her dimpled hand tucked so prettily among the golden rings on

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her head, her tears trickled down, and fell on Tot's face.

"What do I deserve more than this poor, starving mother?" she said, sobbing; "and yet how different my condition is! O heavenly Father, make me grateful for all thy mercies!"

By and by, when she went to the kitchen again, the woman began to tell her sad story:—

"My husband died of fever, ma'am. He caught it in the iron factory where he worked. Baby

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was only a month old then; and I wasn't able to earn anything for a long time before. He was sick three weeks, and then he died. He had his senses a few minutes at the last; and he prayed to God to raise up friends for the widow and fatherless boy. I suppose I myself had the fever in my bones, for I was sick after he died, and didn't rightly know what was going on. The neighbors were very kind, and took care of me as well as they could;

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and I prayed to die if it was God's will, and take baby with me to heaven. But instead of dying I grew better; and then as I had not a cent of money left, I started to go home to my father's house. But when I was opposite your gate, I feared I was dying, and thought if I could crawl in here, perhaps God would put it into somebody's heart to be kind to my baby; and now I believe that God heard my husband's dying prayers, and sent me to you."

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Mrs. Corwin wiped her eyes many times while the widow was telling her story.

"Yes," she said; "for the sake of our dear Saviour who told his disciples to love each other, I will be your friend."

The poor widow stayed at Corwin's Nest for a week, till she and the baby were quite recovered; and in the mean time the lady wrote to her father, and received an answer that he would be very glad to have his daughter come

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with her child, and keep house for him. Mr. Corwin gave her money to pay her fare, and his wife made her a nice suit of clothes fit for a widow, thanking her heavenly Father for this opportunity to do good to one of his children.

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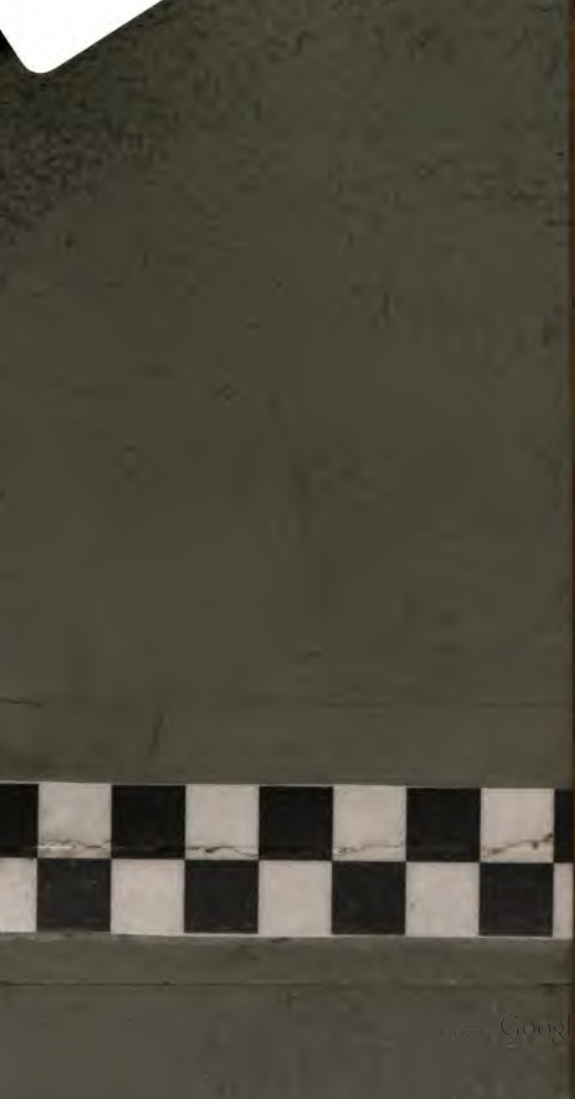

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